



Destination Updates as on 9 July 2021

INDIA

The Finance Ministry of the Government of India has announced a major stimulus to attract international tourists to India once the borders reopen for tourism. The scheme will waive off the Indian Visa fees for the first 5-lakh international tourists that apply for it. The offer is valid until 31 March 2022 or till the first five lakh applications are received, whichever comes first.

The announcement came as a part of the latest series of relief packages for the different economic sectors affected by the global pandemic including tourism. The Union Finance Minister also announced several other support schemes to help revive the tourism sector including provision of working capital or personal loans to people in the tourism sector to discharge liabilities or restart businesses impacted due to Covid-19.

With the vaccination drive in full swing across the country, domestic tourism is on the rise once more. While it is providing the much-needed boost to the industry, it is also necessary to remain cautious and vigilant about social distancing and sanitization protocols. State governments are also urging citizens to get vaccinated as soon as possible to prevent a third wave or minimise its impact.

As on date, over 364 million doses of vaccination have been administered in India with over 4.9% of the total adult population having received both doses.

For detailed and latest updates on vaccination and number of cases, please [click here](#).

[click here](#) to view – The COVID 19 Tracker for India.

[click here](#) to view - The Monument Re-Opening Status across India.

BHUTAN

In welcome news, Denmark has stepped up to provide 250,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines as a goodwill gesture to help the Himalayan country in its time of need. Bhutan had received its first lot of Covishield doses from India in March as a part of the 'Vaccine Maitri' initiative of the Indian Government. However, with the deadly second wave hitting India with unprecedented intensity, export of the Indian manufactured AstraZeneca vaccines to Bhutan has been delayed indefinitely.

The global COVAX alliance has also promised to provide Bhutan 20% of its requirement of AstraZeneca vaccines. However, that might arrive only by August. There is also uncertainty regarding the exact date of arrival of the 16 million doses of US manufactured Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines promised to Asian countries including Bhutan. In such a situation, Denmark's gesture will ensure that Bhutan's citizens can avail their second dose of vaccine.

In an effort to encourage, people to remain safe and use sanitizers and masks, Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck has been walking and travelling on horseback and car throughout the eastern and southern borders of the country delivering the message of hope and vigilance. This effort on the part of the king comes as a heartening gesture for the people of Bhutan.

The number of Covid-19 cases of the Delta variant has been on the rise in Bhutan raising concerns amongst the people of the country. However, there has been only one Covid-related death as on date.

Please [click here](#) for the latest updates.

NEPAL

The Government of Nepal has decided to prolong the prohibitory order in the valley (Kathmandu, Lalitpur & Bhaktapur) until 15 July 2021 with ease on various private and public sectors. Under the new directives, vehicles can ply normally while following all safety protocols. Shops, pharmacies, and medical supply stores will remain open as per usual. Restaurants can operate takeaway and online delivery services.

However, restrictions continue to be in place on any form of public gatherings, dine-in restaurants, movie theatres, salons, health clubs, and swimming pools. Domestic flights have resumed operation at full capacity from 1 July; however, the number of flights is reduced to 50%.

There has been no change for entry and quarantine rules for foreigner travellers from those mentioned in the previous update.

For latest figures and detailed statistics, please [click here](#).

SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka received its first batch of 26,000 doses of Pfizer vaccine on 5 July making it the first South Asian country to get the US manufactured jab. This shipment is part of the 800,000 doses of vaccine due to be delivered over the next few weeks.

Sri Lanka expects to receive 5 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines by the end of 2021 through the financing of World Bank's Sri Lanka Covid-19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Project.

The island has so far administered India manufactured AstraZeneca Covishield, Russian Sputnik V, and Chinese Sinopharm to over 2.9 million of its total adult population with approximately 1.23 million people receiving both doses.

While new cases as well as the daily death toll continues to rise in the island nation, tourism continues to operate with testing and quarantine protocols laid out for fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated, and non-vaccinated tourists arriving into Sri Lanka. Travellers with travel history (including transit) in the past 14 days to India, Vietnam, South American, and African countries will not be permitted to disembark in Sri Lanka. Tourists with negative PCR result can travel to designated landmarks under bio-bubble arrangement.

For latest statistics, please [click here](#).

[Click here](#) to read more on our proposed post-Covid preparations.

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